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## Meeting Notes

**Date:** Wednesday, January 18, 2012

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Location:** Mid-America Regional Council, 600 Broadway, Suite 200, Kansas City, Missouri

**Purpose:** Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting No. 1

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### Participants

#### **CAG Members Present**

3<sup>rd</sup> Council District (KCMO), Augusta Wilbon  
3<sup>rd</sup> Council District (KCMO), Virginia Williams  
City of Independence, Donna Coatsworth  
City of Raytown, Andy Noll  
Jackson County, Scott George  
MARC, Mell Henderson  
MARC, Ron Achelpohl (alternate)  
Greater Kansas City Chamber, Nora Lockton  
Kansas City Industrial Council, Ron Schikevitz  
OOIDA, Kip Hough

#### **CAG Members Absent**

City of Kansas City, Linda Clark

City of Kansas City, Steve Ornduff  
JC Sports Complex Authority, Jim Rowland

#### **MoDOT Staff**

Dan Niec, District Engineer  
Matt Killion, Area Engineer  
Allan Zafft, Transportation Planning Specialist  
Jennifer Benefield, Customer Relations Manager  
Lee Ann Kell, District Planning Manager

#### **Consultant Team**

Chris Nazar, CDM Smith  
Triveece Harvey, Vireo

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### Agenda Items

**1. Welcome and Introductions:** Matt Killion (MoDOT Area Engineer) opened the meeting, advising Community Advisory Group (CAG) members that he would be the facilitator for the CAG for the I-70 Second Tier Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) from the Paseo Boulevard interchange to the Blue Ridge Cutoff interchange. Then Dan Niec (MoDOT, District Engineer) provided a brief overview of the study. Niec noted the following:

- Large investment in the region.
- MoDOT is looking for big projects across the state for funding.
- Engagement for the I-70 Second Tier EIS should address needs and develop solutions.

Niec extended his thanks to CAG members for agreeing to be part of the planning process.

Killion asked the CAG members to introduce themselves and share their thoughts about I-70. The group responded as follows:

- I-70 carries lots of traffic, directly impacts growth vitality.



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- Want to see improvement in maintenance and beautification.
- Gateway to Metro and Kansas City—Plan better access, function.
- Impacts adjacent neighborhoods.
- Want to see maintenance and improvements, e.g. beautification like Blue Ridge Cutoff area.
- Has statewide significance, important corridor for business.
- Important to regional economy—Freight, commuting corridor.
- Major arterial—Provides economic value and first impressions of Kansas City.
- Must be accessible and functional.

Killion provide the group with an overview of why I-70 between the Paso and Blue Ridge Cutoff interchanges was being studied. He noted that the freeway:

- Was more than 50 years old and had deteriorating pavement and bridges.
- Had outlasted its original design life of 20 years and was experiencing traffic delays and congestion.
- Had merging and weaving issues at the interchanges.
- Was a barrier to non-motorized travelers.

**2. Project Review and Background:** Allan Zafft (MoDOT, Transportation Planning Specialist) explained that the project development process for the I-70 Second Tier EIS involved four steps:

- Step 1: Planning
- Step 2: Environmental (we are here)
- Step 3: Design
- Step 4: Construction  
(remaining steps are contingent upon available funding)

Zafft described the history of the study, noting that the I-70 Major Investment Study (2000-2004) and the I-70 First Tier EIS (2008-2011) were complete. He said that the First Tier Study involved 18 miles of I-70 generally from the Kansas-Missouri Stateline to I-470 and included the Downtown Loop. Zafft said that the purpose and need for the study involved:

- Improving safety
- Reducing congestion
- Restoring and maintain infrastructure
- Improving accessibility
- Improving goods movement

Zafft said that the planning process for the I-70 First Tier EIS involved addressing broad strategies and issues. He said that an initial 15 strategies were screened or evaluated before four reasonable first tier improvement strategies were determined. He said that the reasonable strategies were as follows:

- **No-Build:** Includes maintenance activities and projects already committed for construction in MoDOT's five-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. It also maintains the existing bus service currently provided by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA)

- **Improve Key Bottlenecks:** Focuses on improving the key locations along I-70 where slowdowns occur, where traffic congestion is highest, and where there are safety concerns. It also includes several more improvements than the No-Build Strategy, such as collector distributor roads, auxiliary lanes, bus-on shoulders, and park and ride facilities
- **Add General Lanes:** Adds a lane in each direction for use by all vehicles (cars and trucks) to improve the traffic flow through the corridor. It also includes many of the key concepts of the No-Build and Improve Key Bottleneck Strategies
- **Transportation Improvement Corridor:** Includes a new Transportation Improvement Corridor located along the three general purpose lanes in each direction from the Downtown loop to East of Lee's Summit Road. It also includes many of the key concepts of the No-Build and Improve Key Bottlenecks Strategies. Note: This corridor could be used for transportation features such as HOV (high occupancy vehicles) lane, and HOT (high occupancy toll) lane, reversible lane, or bus only lane.

Zafft said that the reasonable strategies were further evaluated and a preferred strategy was identified: Improve Key Bottlenecks (Downtown Loop through I-435) and Improve Key Bottlenecks or Add General Lanes (East of I-435 to I-470). He said that five SIUs (Sections of Independent Utility) were also identified but MoDOT was moving forward with the two located between the Paseo and Blue Ridge Cutoff interchanges because this stretch of I-70 is currently experience deteriorating pavement and bridges, traffic delays and congestion, and merging and weaving issues at interchanges. He said that the area would be studied in more detail through the current I-70 Second Tier EIS process.

A CAG member asked if the Improve Key Bottlenecks Strategy would be used as a base for the area from Downtown through I-435 and Zafft said yes. Zafft continued to explain that the Second Tier EIS refines the needs identified in the First Tier Study. It determines more specific definitions of the improvements and includes a more detailed environmental analysis. Zafft said that the Second Tier EIS is not a "redo" of the First Tier study.

Zafft outlined the schedule for the Second Tier EIS, noting the following:

- December 2011 - Initiation
- March 2012 - Purpose and Need
- June 2012 - Initial Alternatives
- November 2012 - Reasonable Alternatives
- August 2013 - Draft EIS
- September 2013 - Public Hearing
- March 2014 - Final EIS
- May 2014 - Record of Decision

After Zafft's outline, a CAG member asked if funding could be available for local improvements. Zafft responded in the affirmative but said that the projects must have logical termini. Another CAG member commented that available right-of-way at the Benton Boulevard and Jackson Avenue curves would impact the improvements. A third CAG member asked if a traffic analysis would be completed during the Second Tier EIS to evaluate local traffic impacts. Zafft answered that such a study would be completed, but its target area would extend beyond the I-70 Second Tier EIS study area.

3. **Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Plan:** Zafft outlined the public participation and agency coordination process for the study. He advised that the current plan was still a

draft that MoDOT was reviewing. He said that it would be updated as needed throughout the study process.

**4. Roles and Responsibilities:** Killion described the roles of MoDOT staff and CAG members during the study, noting that CAG members would:

- Provide input through the study process.
- Communicate with your agency/organization.
- Commit to attend CAG meetings.
- Adhere to CAG operating agreement.

**5. Proposed Operating Agreement for Community Advisory Group:** Killion noted that a copy of the CAG operating agreement was included with the CAG members' binders. He then provided a brief overview of the agreement. He said that the agreement was open for discussion and feedback but that final action would be taken during the next meeting.

A CAG member asked which companies were included with the study's consultant team and Killion responded CDM Smith with assistance from Vireo (formerly Patti Banks Associates). Killion noted that CAG member Ron Schikevitz (Burns and McDonnell) represented the Kansas City Industrial Council and that he was not serving on the CAG as a Burns and McDonnell consultant.

Another CAG member asked if other organizations, such as the Northeast Chamber of Commerce and KCATA would be CAG members. Zafft answered that KCATA had been invited to be formal participating agency for the project.

**6. Next Steps:** Killion described the range of future meetings anticipated for the project, noting:

- Mid-March 2012 (CAG Meeting No. 2)
  - Accept Operating Agreement for CAG
  - Purpose and Need
- April 2012 (Listening Post No. 1)
  - Study Overview and Purpose and Need
- Early May 2012 (CAG Meeting No. 3)
  - Initial Alternatives and Screening Criteria
- Early June 2012 (CAG Meeting No. 4)
- Early August 2012 (CAG Meeting No. 5)

After his presentation, Killion asked the CAG members to comment on the best days to meet and they agreed that the same time each month would likely work with their schedules if key time periods, such as Spring Break, were taken into consideration. Mell Henderson said that the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) would provide meeting space at its offices.

A CAG member asked if MoDOT could provide an electronic version of the meeting's slideshow to CAG members, so they could share the presentation materials with their respective groups and Killion answered that the material would be made available to them.

A second CAG member asked when the first I-70 Second Tier EIS newsletter would be available and how community members could sign up for it. Zafft answered that the first newsletter would describe initial alternatives and would be available during the summer of 2012. Henderson added that MARC could feature the project in its newsletter and encourage sign-up.

**7. Adjourn:** Killion adjourned the meeting.